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The Honorable Joseph Biden
Ranking Member, Senate Foreign Relation Committee
439 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

September 30, 2003

Dear Senator Biden:

I am writing to raise serious concerns about Louise Oliver, President Bush's recent nomination for the United States Ambassador to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). As you know, the Administration recently decided to rejoin UNESCO, and the new, stronger, focused UNESCO can be a key international force for peace and tolerance, especially with the U.S.'s involvement.

It may not have been included on Ms. Oliver's official bio that during past two years she has served as president of GOPAC. As you know, GOPAC is the partisan political organization formed by former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich to train and aid Republican candidates nationwide.

UNESCO's mission is to extend tolerance, knowledge and human rights around the world. On the contrary, GOPAC, has engaged over the years in a number of controversial and offensive actions that have in fact encouraged *intolerance*, which is completely antithetical to UNESCO's. Ms. Oliver's association with GOPAC and its actions make her fitness to lead the U.S.'s mission to UNESCO even more questionable.

Among GOPAC's most egregious acts of intolerance are:

- In the early 1990s, GOPAC sent a memo to Republicans suggesting methods of communication that would raise their profiles while demonizing their opponents. The memos endorsed using such words to characterize their opponents as "traitors," "shallow," "sick," and "corrupt."
- In the late 1990s, a House ethics investigation of former Speaker Gingrich revealed that GOPAC used a charitable, tax-exempt organization, the Abraham Lincoln Opportunity Foundation, to raise money and pay for partisan political activities. The IRS later revoked the organization's tax-exempt status.
- During Ms. Oliver's administration, in September of 2002, GOPAC aired racially-insensitive radio ads targeted at African-American audiences in Kansas and Missouri that compared Social Security to "reverse reparations" paid to whites. Due to criticism, GOPAC was forced to withdraw the ads.
- According to today's press reports Oliver "has been credited with restoring some of the political vitality" to GOPAC, and she "brought back the video tapes and other organizations methods that Gingrich had used to train activists and candidates in the field" (*Roll Call*, "GOPAC Chief Tapped for UNESCO Job," September 30, 2003).

Given these facts, it would seem that Ms. Oliver's most recent experience makes her uniquely unqualified for such an important international post. GOPAC is distinctly undiplomatic.

Press reports today have suggested that, "The choice of Ms. Oliver, a staunch conservative, as ambassador may indicate the direction the Bush administration wants UNESCO to take." (*The New York Times*, "A Photo Op: O Say Can You See the Eiffel Tower?" September 30, 2003). Given her history, it is important to ask, exactly what is the "direction" the president foresees for UNESCO? And, if the president is sincere in his desire to be an active, constructive partner in UNESCO, why did he not appoint a distinguished Republican with an extensive background in foreign affairs to the position, instead of the former president of a partisan organization accustomed to spreading intolerance?

Today's press reports about the Administration's announcement also raise a number of questions about Ms. Oliver's work history. Though the Administration's announcement press release claims Ms. Oliver is president of Oliver Management Consultants, *Roll Call* could not locate or contact that firm. Furthermore *Roll Call* points out that the Administration's release claims she was Commissioner of the National Council on Children, a council that does not exist. This patchy knowledge of Ms. Oliver's work history is troubling, particularly since she has been nominated to represent our country in an important international organization.

Senator, press reports today claim that Ms. Oliver "is expected to win easy Senate confirmation" (*Times*). However, the facts behind her work history warrant extreme scrutiny of Ms. Oliver during the nomination process. Perhaps a close examination of Ms. Oliver will allay my concerns, but, at the very least, I urge you to find out more about her credentials and the Administration's plans for UNESCO. I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

 -
CAROLYN B. MALONEY
Member of Congress